

# PORCH

## Design Guidelines

- PO1** Replace reconstructed entrance or porch features with in-kind materials. If that is not economically or technically feasible, a compatible substitute material may be considered. Composition and plastic moldings, however, should not be used due to their unproven longevity (does not apply in the Clifton Preservation District).
- PO2** Photographically document architectural porch features that are slated for reconstruction prior to the removal of any historic fabric.
- PO3** Design replacement porch railings and balusters to match the originals as closely as possible. If it is technically or economically unfeasible to accomplish this, a simplified porch rail and baluster design may be used of 2" x 4" rails and 2" x 2" pickets, set between top and bottom rails, and nailed to the inside face of the rail. Railings should be finished with paint or an opaque stain. Plans are available from the Landmarks Commission.
- PO4** Do not use cast- or wrought-iron columns, railings, or balusters as a replacement for brick or wood porch elements. Columns should match the proportion, detailing, and size of the original.
- PO5** When installing a new code-required handrail or railing, select a design that is simple and stylistically appropriate. Generally, metal is appropriate for masonry buildings and wood for frame buildings.
- PO6** Do not add conjectural porch ornament; often its style conflicts with the style of the house.
- PO7** Do not use over-sized boards (2" thick) for porch floors. 3/4" to 1" tongue-and-groove boards are generally appropriate.
- PO8** Install replacement porch flooring that closely matches the original tongue-and-groove flooring dimensions. A maximum gap of 1/16" should be left between boards to allow for expansion. Wood edging should be applied to the exposed ends of floorboards to prevent moisture infiltration into the grain.
- PO9** Do not cover porch or cornice elements with vinyl or aluminum siding.
- PO10** Do not install porch ceilings or close in exposed eaves where none existed previously. Exposed rafters and roof decks are character-defining features for certain architectural styles.
- PO11** Replace deteriorated porch steps with in-kind materials. Replacement steps should be of the same scale and dimensions as the original. Stone steps may be patched with concrete that is tinted a visually-compatible color.
- PO12** Do not replace historic stone steps unless the stone itself is no longer useable. Resetting stones on a firm foundation and repointing or applying sealant can address most problems.
- PO13** Front porches can be enclosed provided that the construction is reversible and that no alterations are made to the original façade. Screen panels that can be removed seasonally, are set behind porch elements, and do not damage historic fabric may be permitted.
- PO14** Do not obscure the design or detailing of original porch elements when undertaking a side or rear porch enclosure project. Large sheets of glass recessed behind original porch features should be used rather than solid materials such as wood, stucco, or masonry.
- PO15** Do not add porches to the primary façades of structures that never had porches. PO15 does not apply in the Clifton Preservation District.